

THE MARRIAGES; or, Fatal
Consequences. Price 1 s.



THE
MARRIAGES; or, Fatal
Consequences. Price 1 s.

SURPRISE;

OR,
CONSTANCY REWARDED.

CONSTANCY REWARDED.

III. The Prince: A Novel, by a Young Lady.
Price 1 s. 6 d. (2 s. 1 s.)

Love, like a flower, grows a short-lived plant;
Or needs the constant shade of a surrounding plant;
Brought by Time, and by Love's hand;
Here in a moment, in a moment's hand;
For Time's hand is the hand that is the hand.

LONDON.

Printed for J. Roberts, in Warwick-Lane.

Hayward

Just Publish'd, the Third Edition of,

I. THE MASQUERADERS; or, Fatal Curiosity. Price 1 s.

*What guards the Purity of melting Maids,
In Courtly Balls, and mid-night Masquerades;
Safe from the treacherous Friend and daring Spark,
The Glance by Day, and Whisper in the Dark:
When kind Occasion prompts their warm Desires,
When Musick softens, and when Dancing fires!*

POPE.

II. The FATAL SECRET; or, Constancy in Distress. The Second Edition. Price 1 s.

*Beauty, thou art a fair, but fading Flower,
The tender Prey of every coming Hour:
In Youth, thou, Comet-like, art gaz'd upon;
But art portentous to thyself alone.*

Both by the same Author. SADLEY.

III. The PRUDE: A Novel. By a Young Lady. Price 1 s.

*Love, like a Meteor, shews a short-liv'd Blaze;
Or treads thro' various Skies a wand'ring Maze:
Begot by Fancy, and by Fancy led;
Here in a Moment, in a Moment fled:
But fix'd by Obligations, it will last;
For Gratitude's the Charm that binds it fast.*

LANSDOWN.

Printed for J. ROBERTS, in Warwick-Lane.

THE
SURPRIZE;
OR
Constancy Rewarded.

By the AUTHOR of
The Masqueraders, or Fatal Curiosity.

*Love's an hercick Passion, which can find
No room in any base degen'rate Mind:
It kindles all the Soul with Honour's Fire,
To make the Lover worthy his Desire.*

Dryden.



L O N D O N:

Printed for J. ROBERTS, near the Oxford-
Arms in Warwick-Lane. M.DCC.XXIV.

THE

SURPRISE

OR

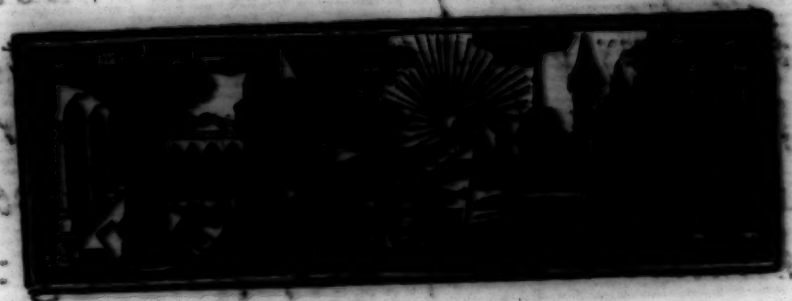
Confined Remembrance.

By the Author of
The History of the English Nation

London: Printed by J. Baskett, at the
Printers Office, in St. Dunstons Church
Lane, 1719.

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Printers Office, in St. Dunstons Church
Lane, 1719.

(v)



TO

Sir Richard Steele.

SIR,

THE next Step to having
Merit one's-self, is to ad-
mire it in another; and
that I no sooner testify'd
how very much I am sensible of
yours, was only owing to my desires
of doing it in a manner more wor-
thy

vi DEDICATION.

thy your Acceptance. I flatter'd myself that I should one day have it in my power to lay at your Feet, something less unworthy of your Patronage, than the Trifles I have hitherto been capable of producing: But, alas! the Wings of my Ambition in this, as in almost every thing else, are clip'd; and all I can do, is, to prove I have the Will, but want the Power to please.

YET, Conscious as I am of my own Defects, my Impatience has got the better of my Humility.—I no longer can refrain that Publick Acknowledgment which is your Due from the whole World, whom your inimitable Writings have improv'd:
Others

DEDICATION. vii

Others may boast the instructive Art in some one Science to embellish Learning; but you refine the Mind, and make it fit for elevated Impressions.— You, Sir, teach us how to Think, as well as Act; and by inspiring us with just and noble Sentiments, render it impossible to behave in a manner contrary to them.

THOMAS BURNET

THE little History I presume to offer, being composed of Characters full of Honour and Generosity, I thought I had a fit Opportunity, by presenting it to one who has made it so much his Study to infuse those Principles, and whose every Action is a shining Example of them, to express

viii DEDICATION.

**express my Zeal in declaring
myself with all imaginable Re-
gard,**

S I R,

Your most Obligated, and

Most Obedient,

Humble Servant.



T H E
S U R P R I Z E;
O R,
Constancy Rewarded.

A L I N D A had Beauty, Wit, Good-humour, and by the Death of her Parents, was left Mistress of a considerable Fortune in her own dispose; which last Article attracted a great Number of Adorers. Among those who solicited her Favour, there were two so equal in her Esteem, that the Regard she had for both, render'd it impossible for her to make choice of either: The Name of the one was *Ellmour*, the other *Bellamant*. Each had Perfections rarely to be found in an Age so degenerate as this; and if the former of these Gentlemen had the Advantage of a much longer Court-

B ship,

2 *The* SURPRIZE; or,

ship, and better Estate than the other, the charming *Bellamant* had Graces which well made up for those Deficiencies.—There was something so prodigiously enchanting in his Countenance and Manner of Behaviour, that it was scarce possible to know him, without loving him. *Alinda*, whether it were that her Hour was not yet come, or that she had not a Soul susceptible of the tender Passion, felt not any of those violent Emotions which are the Characteristicks of Desire: 'Tis probable, had either of them singly made his Addressee to her, she might have been persuaded to have thought herself happy in consenting; but, all things weigh'd between them, their Merits seem'd so equal, that the Scale would turn on neither side.

WHILE she was in this Dilemma, a young Lady, a near Relation, whom she had not seen for some Years, came to Town; and the Pleasure she expected to find in her Conversation, for a while gave truce to all other Thoughts. But alas! she found not those Charms in her Society which it was wont to afford.—Her once sprightly Wit, and Gaiety of Disposition, was now changed to a heavy Languor.—She spoke but seldom, and when she did, it was in such a manner, that the Standers-by might easily perceive she forc'd herself to a Complaisance, which could not but be painful to her.—*Alinda*, who tenderly loved her, was extremely troubled to observe this Alteration; but though she press'd her to it by all the Adjurations imaginable, she could draw nothing from her that could enable her to form
any

Constancy Rewarded. 3

any Conjecture of the Cause:—Till one day, as they were sitting together, word being brought to *Alinda* that *Bellamant* was come to visit her, *Euphemia* (for that was the Name of this fair Disconsolate) starting from her Chair, and running to the Window, as though to look who it was, fell down in a Swoon on the Floor.—’Tis hard to say, whether the Concern *Alinda* was in to see her thus, or Amazement at what had occasion’d it, was most predominant in her Soul; but performing all the tender Offices of Friendship, in using means for her Recovery, she at length lifted up her Eyes, but with such a Torrent of Tears, as though it was to them she was indebted for forcibly opening those Lids, which but a Moment before seem’d sealed with Death.—As soon as she had the Power of Utterance, preventing any Interrogatories *Alinda* might probably have made, How long, said she, have you been of *Bellamant*’s Acquaintance? which the other having answer’d, But a short time: I beg, resum’d she, you will, on no account, mention to him the Name of your unhappy Cousin.—I entreat this Favour of you, by the near Affinity which is between us, by that Friendship you have flatter’d me with, and by that which I have in reality for you:—And in return, I will relate to you the Circumstances of a History you have seem’d desirous to be inform’d of, and which, Shame only has kept me from revealing.

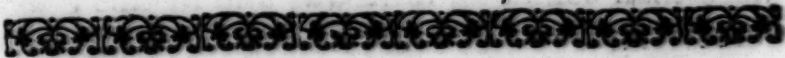
ALINDA, though more astonish’d than before, assur’d her, she would most faithfully obey the Injunction she laid on her: And,

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said she, wholly to remove your Doubts, I will not see him, till your discovering to me the Reasons you have for an Order, which at present appears so much a Riddle, shall instruct me in what manner I shall proceed.——She had no sooner said this, than she called a Servant, commanding him to tell *Bellamant*, that being engaged on Business, she could not receive the Favour he intended her that day. You see, *resumed she*, my dear *Euphemia*, I have, for this time, put it out of my power to gratify that Inclination too many of our Sex have for blabbing every thing that has the Appearance of a Secret: And if it will be any Mitigation of the Sorrows wherewith you seem so much oppress'd, will continue still to do so, by never seeing *Bellamant* more. Take heed, kind *Alinda*, *answer'd the other*, take heed, lest you promise more than you should be able to perform.——Consult your Heart, and then resolve me, if I indeed should exact that Proof of Friendship from you, would it be in your power to banish *Bellamant*? I never yet could perceive (*said Alinda blushing*) that I had any Sentiments for that Gentleman, which should render the parting with him a difficulty.——But if I were in reality guilty of that Weakness your Words seem to intimate, it must be doing a Violence to myself, greater than yet I have any Notion of, that I would not willingly risque, to make you easy. There pass'd between them many other such Expressions of mutual Friendship and Regard for the Happiness of each other: but the one being impatient for the unravelling an Affair which she could not yet comprehend, and the other as desirous of revealing

Constancy Rewarded. 5

vealing it, they shut themselves into *Alinda's* Closet; and having given strict Orders to the Servants, not to disturb them on any account whatever, *Euphemia* began to satisfy her Curiosity, in these Words.



The History of EUPHEMIA,

I Need not tell you, *said she*, that my Parents, by their late Misfortunes, were reduced to an Ebb too low, to be able to leave me a Fortune answerable to the Hopes with which I had been educated; you know all those Affairs perfectly well; as also that my Aunt in *Wiltshire*, pitying the Disappointment which at so early an Age fell on me, took me under her Protection: but you are yet to be inform'd, with how extreme a Tenderness she treated me; all the Love which I could have expected from the fondest Mother, joined to the Freedom of a Sister, and the Complaisance of the most distant Acquaintance, I found from her. The Belief that her Affection would considerably add to my little Fortune, with the Advantages of Youth, good Clothes, and a tolerable Face and Humour, gain'd me, in a little time after I had been in her House, several who called themselves my Lovers;—but I was possess'd with I know not what kind of an Aversion to any Talk of that nature.—— I was not only unsusceptible of Love, but also regardless of Interest, for some of the Offers made

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made would have been highly for my advantage to have accepted.—Had my Aunt, indeed, been more pressing for me to have made my Choice among them, 'tis probable I should not have run the hazard of disobliging her; but as her Goodness to me was in every thing more than common, so it was also in this; and perceiving no Inclination in me to change the State I was in, forbore to urge me beyond my own Desires.—O the Tranquillity I then enjoy'd!—How calm, how undisturb'd were then my Thoughts.—No busy Cares waited on my waking Hours—no racking Anguish haunted my Nights and broke my peaceful Slumbers.—Life, like an unruffled Stream, slid on serenely gay.—I was so ignorant of Woe, that I believ'd there could not be a greater than the Head-ach. As for the Disorders of the Mind, I looked on them as chimerical, unless occasion'd by some horrid Crime, and therefore unworthy Commiseration.—O! that I still had been that happy Idiot.—Dear-bought Experience! how hast thou undone me?

A Storm of Sighs here intercepted the Passage of her Words, and she was obliged to pause, to give the struggling Anguish vent, which else might have thrown her again into the same Condition from which she had so lately been recover'd:—But overcoming, as well as she was able, the secret Load which press'd her Spirits down, she at length resumed Strength enough to prosecute her Relation, in this manner.

MY

Constancy Rewarded. 9

MY Aunt, *pursued she*, who, as I have already told you, took delight in affording me all the innocent Recreations which were becoming me to take, would needs have me accompany some young Ladies in our Neighbourhood, who were going to the *Bath*, it being then the Season of the Year when all the gay part of the World resort thither, with as great an Impatience to partake the Diversions of the Place, as the Old and Infirm do in the Hope of being restored to new Life and Health, by the help of those excellent Waters.——

You may be sure, I was not backward in complying with a Command so perfectly kind and obliging to me; and, to leave nothing undone, which could make me see she study'd my Credit, as well as Pleasure, she order'd several very rich Suits of Clothes to be made for me, and presented me with Jewels of hers to the Value of some thousand Pounds, and gave two of her Footmen commission to wait on me there, as their sole Mistrefs. It was thought by those who knew she was preparing to set me out in this splendid manner, that it was done with a design that, thus adorn'd, thus attended, I might get a Husband among that numerous Assembly, more to my advantage than I could in our retir'd part of the World: If it were so, which I was far from thinking, her kind Intentions found a cruel Disappointment; all those Expectations, with my Peace of Mind, were sunk, to rise no more!——

But I will not anticipate what the Discovery is I have to make, by giving you any Hints which may light Conjecture to the Sequel.——In fine,

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I went, made as good an Appearance as any Lady on the Walks, and had my Vanity not a little gratify'd to find myself more address'd to than some who had been celebrated Toasts, and whose Birth and Fortune were infinitely superior to mine.—I doubt not, indeed, but great part of the Respect paid to me, was owing to my Dress and Equipage; for being utterly unknown there, I was taken for a much greater Fortune than I was in reality.

THE Variety of Humours and Amusements one finds in such Places, is agreeable enough to a Mind entirely at ease, as mine was, and unprepossess'd with any other Ideas; and as I was naturally of a Disposition rather too gay and spirituous, than the contrary, I never refused the coming into any Measures which had a Prospect of Diversion in them;—whether the Company was for Riding, Walking, Dancing, Playing, I readily made one, and had the Reputation of being not the least entertaining among them.—But soon these empty Pleasures ceased, one fatal Moment robb'd them of their Joys, and taught me to despise the gaudy, noisy Nothings, and send my Soul in search of Happiness more elevated.

HAP'NING to go with one of the Ladies whom I had accompany'd from home, one Morning, with a design to bathe, we perceiv'd a Gentleman just coming out of it: the peculiar Richness and fine Fancy of his Night-Gown and Cap, immediately attracted our Eyes; but we could not long be taken up with an Admiration so trifling as his Dress, which serv'd

Constancy Rewarded. 9

serv'd only to make his lovely Form more conspicuous; the Nobleness of his Air, the Exactness of his Shape, the manly Majesty which sparkled in his Eyes, the thousand thousand unutterable Graces which play'd about his fine-proportion'd Mouth, too much engross'd out Sight, to leave a Glance for any other View.— Mine it did at least, and I could have wish'd to have been all Eye, so greedy, so eager was I to gaze upon his Charms.—The God of Love now rush'd at once with his whole force into my Soul, and in an Instant, every throbbing Vein swell'd with the new, the soft Desire!—The astonishing Delight of looking on him, took from me the Power of Thought; I seem'd as tho' riveted to the place I stood in, nor, till he was gone past my straining Sight to reach him, had Speech or Motion, though the Lady who was with me, as she afterwards told me, had several times spoke to me, and pull'd me by the Sleeve to come forward. Ignorant of what I ail'd, yet conscious of a wondrous Change within, I long'd to be alone; and, under the pretence of being suddenly a little indispos'd, refused to bathe that day, and retired as fast as I could to my Apartment.

A S little an Opinion as I had of Love, I had read a great deal of its Influence; and when I examin'd the Symptoms in myself, found they were so near the Description of that Passion, that I no sooner began to compare them, than I ceased to doubt if they were the same.—Yes, I felt too strongly the Power I had so long contemned, not to repent of my former Unbelief.—And from the first

C

Moment

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Moment I perceiv'd myself in Love, perceiv'd also I was unhappy; not all the Flatteries I had been accustom'd to hear, could make me hope there was any thing in me worthy of being taken notice of by a Man, so far above the common Rank of Men, as to his bodily Perfections, and who, I knew not, but might be of a Quality which might render all hope of a return of Passion from him as insolent, as vain.——Resolving, however, to be ascertain'd who he was, and, if it was possible, have one more sight of him, I dress'd myself in the most becoming manner I could, believing that in all probability he would be on the Walks in the Evening; or if he were not, I should easily find some one or other, who, by my Description of him, might know him enough, to be able to inform me of his Name and Quality.——Between the time of my seeing him, and that to walk in, I had various Conjectures what the Reason should be which had oblig'd him to remain retir'd in a place so publick; for I was certain he had very little appear'd abroad, because there was no Assembly in which I had not a part, and could not think he was lately come, the Season being far spent, and the Company were beginning to think of a Return.——However, in spite of Improbability, this last happen'd to be the Truth; for I had no sooner enter'd the Walks, than I saw him there, with an Air and Mien which methought gave a new Lustre to the Place.

THE Freedom used there, gave him an opportunity of accosting me, and the Ladies with me,

Constancy Rewarded. II

me, which he did in a manner far above my hopes; and, in the way of Conversation, let us know how unhappy he thought himself to lose so much of the Season, which had been occasion'd by a Fall from his Horse in coming there, being oblig'd to lie a considerable time on the Road to recover some Hurts that Accident had given him.——Just as he was speaking this, some Company joining us on the other side, with whom my two Companions were talking, To be confin'd so long, Madam, said he to me, in an odious Inn, was to a Man naturally fond of Delicacy, an unspeakable Mortification; but my Misfortune had been by infinite degrees more terrible to be borne, had I known it had detain'd me from the Presence of a Charmer such as you. I will not go about, my dear *Alinda*, to represent with how much Transport I receiv'd this little Compliment, nor the manner in which I answer'd it; you will hereafter have sufficient Proofs of my Weakness, without spinning out my Narration to a tedious length by the repetition of Trifles: so I shall only say, this was but the Introduction to a thousand more passionate and tender Declarations.——In fine, he behav'd himself in such a manner, in spite of the Disadvantages of being in a place so publick, and unfit for Discourses of that nature, that I half flatter'd myself I had been capable of creating the same Emotions in his Soul, which I felt so powerful in my own on his account.——

I went to bed that Night, with Reflections far different from those which had used to accompany

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company me.—I now knew what it was to hope and fear—to raise my tow'ring Expectations to the Skies, then sink them with as little shew of reason down to Hell, just as wild Fancy and unguided Thought presented an Idea of Events, or to be wish'd, or dread-ed:—confounding Probabilities with their contraries—forming a thousand incoherent Resolutions; yet unable to determine any thing—In all the sweet Perplexities, the pleasing Restlessness that attends new-born Desire, did I pass the Hours till the Dawn arriv'd; at which time I rose to dress, being to meet him by appointment, to share the Pleasures of a morning Walk, which he said was infinitely more agreeable, than the times generally made choice of for that purpose.—Judge not too severely of my Weakness, dear *Alinda*, that I so imprudently consented to meet a Man alone, a Man whom I had never seen but that Day, and whose very Name I was yet a stranger to: if ever you have experienc'd the force of raging, burning Love, you will forgive and pity my Proceedings, not only what I have already related, but that which I have yet to speak.—

SHE blush'd and paus'd at these Words, perhaps expecting *Alinda* wou'd make some Answer to 'em; but perceiving she was silent, and took no other notice of the Apology she made, than by tenderly looking on her, and gently bowing her Head in approbation of it, she continu'd to go on in the Recital she had begun.

TO

TO repeat, *said she*, the obliging Expressions he made use of to thank the Condescension I had favour'd him with, wou'd be an Injury to them, since the Energy with which they were deliver'd, and the Looks which accompanied them, added a Charm to them, which all the Words in the world, if spoke by any other Person, cou'd not boast.——I would have you therefore imagine, that all that can be conceiv'd of Tender, of Passionate, all that the most eager Love and refin'd Wit have the power to inspire, fill'd his Professions, and adorn'd his Vows.——

THE Conversation lasted for some Hours, and ended in my permitting him to prosecute an honourable Pretension; after he had assur'd me he intended no other, and had acquainted me with his Name and Family, That is an Article (*pursu'd she, blushing more than before*) which I believe I may spare myself the trouble of relating, since I doubt not but both by my Description of his unequal'd Charms, and the Confusion with which I just now saw him at your Gate, you are already sufficiently convinc'd it was no less a Prodigy of Perfection than *Bellamant*, who had the power to influence me to a Weakness, which, to have been guilty of for any other Man, would not have been pardonable.

IT was with all the Earnestness in the world she fix'd her Eyes on the Face of *Alinda*, as tho she would dive into her Soul, and read the Effect these Words made on her; but perceiving

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ceiving no visible Alteration, proceeded in her Discourse without any Interruption.

THE Joy I had (*said she, with a Voice more assur'd than before*) to find that *Bellamant* was not of a Rank superiour to my own, nor had an Estate which cou'd entitle him to the hope of marrying a Woman with a better Fortune, than what I had in possession, and was in expectation of from the Indulgence of my Aunt, is not to be express'd.—I now began to taste the Sweets of Love, I had every day some new Proof of his encrease of Passion, and sure never Man made so good use of his Time as he did; for from his coming to the *Bath*, and that in which we were oblig'd to leave it, was not exceeding ten Days; and were I to repeat the thousand, thousand soft Protestations he made me in that time, you would scarce believe as many Weeks would give them utterance. We were, indeed, from the Moment in which I permitted his Addresses, scarce an hour asunder, but in the Hours allow'd for Repose; and even those, the seeming Impatience of his Passion would infringe, and it was commonly four or five in the Morning, before he could prevail on himself to leave me.—

THE Time of our departure being come, he accompany'd us on horse-back to *Wiltshire*; and after having obtain'd my Aunt's leave, visited me at home with the same Assiduity he had done at the *Bath*.—For the space of a Month, I would not have changed Conditions with the first Princess of the Royal Blood.—

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I thought myself secure of the Affections of the only Man in the World I look'd on as worthy of a Passion so sincere and violent as mine, and one who, tho I could not live in Grandeur with, I believ'd had a Competency to maintain us in a handsome manner.—My Aunt, having had several Conferences with him concerning Settlements and Jointure, approv'd of all he said, and countenanc'd our Affections, which seem'd to wait a Consummation only for a Gentleman, a distant Relation of her's, who was a Lawyer, and was every day expected to come down and draw the Writings. At length he came, *Bellamant* had some talk with him on the Affair, and the next Evening was appointed for signing the Deeds.

HITHERTO the Weakness of my inconsiderate Passion, for a Man I had so little knowledge of, was excus'd by the appearance of the greatest Honour and Sincerity on his side; but now comes the black part of his Character.—Now, now the Disguise of an Angel is thrown off for ever, and all the Fiend in naked Vileness is expos'd to view.—The Morning of that Day, which I expected was to have made him, in every thing but the Ceremony of the Church, for ever mine, instead of coming, as was his Custom every Morning, to give me the *Bonjour*, by the hands of a Country Fellow, who liv'd in a Cottage hard by, I receiv'd a Letter from him.—

THE first sight of the Superscription, for I was perfectly acquainted with the Character,
imme-

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immediately told me who it came from.—
The sending a Letter, when I expected himself,
and the odd manner in which it was brought,
(having a Servant of his own, who, if any Accident had occasion'd his writing, one would think, should have been the most proper Messenger) alarm'd my trembling Heart with Apprehensions which till that moment I was a stranger to.—A thousand various Conjectures, all shocking, all confounding, ran in a moment thro my giddy Brain, and so disabled all my Faculties, that I had scarce Strength or Resolution to open it: but when I did, I found the cruel Certainty of my unexampled Shame, and his cold Perfidiousness, in these Words.

To the most Excellent of her Sex, the
never too much Ador'd *EUPHEMIA*.

I Have for some days past, my for ever
lov'd, for ever ador'd *Euphemia*! been
endeavouring to reveal a cruel Secret, which
to have hid from you, would have render'd
me more guilty in *reality*, than I shall appear
in the disclosing it; but it was not in my
power, while looking on you, to tell you I
must look on you no more:—Yet such is
the sad Necessity of Fate—I must tear myself
for ever from you, must resolve to gaze
no more on your enchanting Eyes—no more
must listen to your heavenly Accents—no
more must be blest'd with the transporting
Proofs of Love, confess'd for a Wretch, who
has it not in his power to deserve the thousand,
thousand Part of that Profusion of
o'er-

Constancy Rewarded. 17

o'erpowering Joy your Goodness has so lavishly shower'd on me.—Yes, Divine Creature! I must be curst in an eternal Absence; or by staying, and putting myself in possession of that Bliss your Extravagancy of Mercy has made me hope, make you a Sharer in Misfortunes which I tremble but to think on.—Rather let me die in the severest Torments, or suffer the worst Misery of Life, prolong'd in tedious Woe, and everlasting Despair, than be guilty of a Crime to her whom more than my Soul I love, and next to Heaven adore.—O! I'm on the rack while writing this.—How was it possible I should speak it then?—Pardon me! Pity me! 'tis all I ask for the extremest Proof of Love a breaking, bleeding Heart e'er gave.—Farewell!—the Tempest in my Mind rages with a Violence too fierce to permit me to add more.—I will not even wish you should remember me, lest it might prevent your giving yourself to some happier Man, tho none can ever love you with greater Purity, and zealous Passion, than him who would have hazarded every thing but your Peace of Mind and Felicity, to have been

Eternally Yours,

BELLAMANT.

WHAT became of me at reading this astonishing Epistle, you may judge, by what I have told you of the Violence of my Passion
D for

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for this perfidious Ingrate. The Grief, the Shame, the Indignation at being used in such a manner, were of themselves sufficient to have broke the Strings of a Heart more inur'd to Misfortunes, and better fortify'd with Presence of Mind, than mine: but to those other Passions, I had Despair and an unvanquishable Tenderness to struggle with.—I knew not whether I was come to the Conclusion, before I fell down in a Swoon, in which I remain'd, till my Aunt, being told a Letter had been brought me, came to my Chamber to learn the Contents, and found me on the Floor with the fatal Paper open in my hand.—She call'd her Women immediately to raise me, while she went aside to examine what had occasion'd the Condition she saw me in.—

BEING with much-ado brought to myself, she used all imaginable Means for my Consolation; but my distracted Brain still running on *Bellamant*—I rav'd incessantly on his Name, entreating he might be sent for, that I might, at least, have the satisfaction of upbraiding him.—That is what I would have done for you, *said my Aunt*; but, alas! he is gone too far for any thing to overtake, unless it be the Curses his Ingratitude to you has drawn upon him.—How! (*interrupted I wildly*) is then the Traitor gone?—He is, *resum'd she*; on the first discovery of what had thrown you in these Agonies, I sent to the House he lodg'd in, and by the People of it was inform'd, that he took horse last Night, after having left that Letter with a strict Charge, that they should send it by somebody
they

they could trust, to deliver it into your own hand this Morning.—

THIS Aggravation of my Sorrows; threw me again into the Condition from which I had so hardly been recover'd, that my Aunt for some time had imagin'd my Soul had entirely taken leave of my Body.—I continu'd in these Swoonings the whole Day, and in the close of it fell into so violent a Fever, that in less than a Week my Life was despair'd of by the Physicians, whom my Aunt, in the beginning of my Illness, had sent Post-Horses to fetch, scrupling no Expence nor Care for my Recovery. But it pleased Heaven, contrary to all their Hopes, when my Distemper was at the worst, to give a sudden check to it.—I fell into a Sleep, which by the Standers-by was believ'd to be my last, and waked considerably amended. By degrees the Violence of the Fever abated, and I was soon restor'd to that *bodily* Health I enjoy'd before; but never, never must hope to recover the Disorders of my *Mind*—they, like a Vulture, prey upon me still, and will do so while Life shall last.—

A Considerable Augmentation of them I receiv'd, when being no sooner able to walk about my Chamber, than my dear Aunt fell ill; whether it were that the Disease I had labour'd under had any thing of Malignity in it, or that it was owing to her too great Concern for me, I know not; but she was seiz'd with the very same Symptoms I had complain'd of: and being of too great an Age to struggle with this powerful Enemy of Nature,

10 *The SURPRIZE; or,*

yielded to its force, and expir'd in a few days.
——In the very Pangs of her Death, her Tenderness for me continu'd; she made her Will, and to compensate as much as possible for the Severity of Fortune in my ill-requited Love, bequeathed me her whole Estate, having, as you know, no Children of her own.

I am now Mistress of two thousand Pounds a Year, besides a considerable Sum of ready Money; but how little is it in the power of Riches to buy Content?——All her Goodness has done for me, serves only to make me a more glorious Wretch.——My Grief for the loss of so dear a Relation, and one who, but for the Contagion of my ill Fate, might probably have liv'd some Years, was for a time suitable to the Cause: But that fatal Passion which, from the first sight of the ungrateful *Bellamant*, had taken possession of my Soul, would suffer no other to be of any long continuance.——

AGAIN, the *Idea* of his Charms return'd with its full Force, and melted me to Wishes too shamefully tender for me to think on without Blushes.——Again, the remembrance of his Falshood, and amazing Baseness, work'd my aching Brain almost to madness.—I hated, and yet lov'd, my divided Soul was torn with Anguish inexpressible! insupportable! till unable to endure the cruel Conflict of such different Passions, I resolv'd never to rest till I had found him, and, if possible, oblige him to an Explanation of his Behaviour, and by the prevalence of what secret Motive he could be

Constancy Rewarded. 21

be induced so barbarously to quit a Woman he had sworn to love, and who, before this late, unhoped Addition of Fortune, was every way his Equal.—The first part of my Wish I have already succeeded in, and hope also to accomplish the rest, if *Alinda* is pleas'd to grant me the Continuance of that Friendship she so generously has profess'd.

HERE the sorrowful *Euphemia* finish'd her little History; and *Alinda*, after having condoled her Misfortune of losing the Man she was so passionately enamour'd of, entreated her to acquaint her by what means she could be capable of serving her; assuring her, with a great many obliging Expressions, that there was nothing in her power, which she would not, with the utmost readiness, comply with, either for her Satisfaction or Revenge. The first thing (*answer'd the other*) and, perhaps, the hardest I shall ask, is, what you have already promis'd, To banish the faithless *Bellamant* from your Presence. That you may depend, (*resum'd Alinda*) I would do for my own sake; nor can my Cousin, I hope, harbour so mean an Opinion of me, as to imagine I would continue to entertain him, after knowing he has been false to a Woman, who has a thousand times my Merit.—You may be assur'd, that were *Euphemia* not my Friend, Self-preservation would be sufficient to prevent me from being her Rival: Therefore insist no more on that Point, but if you would oblige me, command something which may give me an Opportunity of testifying how dear your Interest is to me. There remains no more
(*answer'd*)

22 *The* SURPRIZE; or,

(*answer'd Euphemia*) than that you will, by the means of some Person who may not be suspected, make an Enquiry into his Affairs; I would be acquainted, if possible, with the very depth of his Circumstances; for you must know, that since I heard he made Pretensions to you, I have hope to find him less a Villain than I believ'd.——How is that likely? (*interrupted Alinda, a little surpriz'd at these Words:*) In my Opinion, to address another Woman, after having so solemnly and so publicly avow'd himself your Lover, is the very last degree of Infidelity and Baseness.——It is, indeed (*resum'd the other, with a deep Sigh*) far different from that open Sincerity and Honour he used to say was his greatest Plea for Favour: but when we have cause to think a Person guilty of the most abhorr'd Crime in nature, to find it less than we at first believ'd, makes it appear less than in reality it is.

I could think of nothing which could occasion his quitting me just at that Juncture, when I was to have been made his for ever, but that he was already married; and finding I had Friends of more Interest, than perhaps at first Acquaintance with him he had imagin'd, durst neither proceed further, nor confess the Truth; and therefore by that *Ænigmatical* way of writing, left me at liberty to form what uncertain Conjectures I pleas'd.——But to hear that here in Town, a place, where, doubtless, he is known, he has endeavour'd to obtain you in Marriage, convinces me, it was not a Pre-engagement which depriv'd me of him. Would it then (*cried Alinda*) be any Mitigation

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tion to your Grievs, to be assur'd, it was from no other Motive than Disgust, he left you?

EUPHEMIA, tho' very far from that Vanity by which too many of her Sex are sway'd, could not help red'ning extremely at this Expression: To become an Object of *Dislike* to the Man, whose *Adoration* once we were, is what no Woman can support with Patience; and being of a Temper the most open and sincere that could be, I know not (*said she*) if it would lessen my Grief; but am certain, when I consult my Heart, it would very much add to my *Indignation*; which in time, perhaps, would enable me to overcome the other less excusable Passion. I cannot acquiesce with you in this (*resum'd Alinda*) I think, that tho' either way you have sufficient Cause for Indignation, the first Opinion you had of him after the Letter, gave you the most justifiable Title to it—because, had that Conjecture been true, he had been guilty of a Sin, for which our Laws have decreed a Punishment as severe as for Murder; whereas the other proceeds only from the fault of Nature, an inborn Inconstancy and Ingratitude, which all Men, more or less, have some share of.—I am not arguing (*answer'd the other somewhat peevishly*) which of these two would be the greatest Sin against Heaven, or our Laws, but that which is so against *myself*.

THE Dispute between these Ladies lasted a pretty while, but *Alinda's* better Reasons in the end prevail'd, and they broke off the Conversation, that she might retire to her Closet to prepare

24 The SURPRIZE; or,

prepare a Letter, which was to discard *Bellamant* for ever——As soon as she had finish'd it, she return'd to *Euphemia*, to have her Approbation of what she had written, before she sent it.——She used but little Formality in her Denial, taking more Care that it should appear *absolute*, than *complaisant*: The Words were as follows.

TO *BELLAMANT*.

S I R,

I Am sorry I did not, before now, put an
end to the Trouble you have given your-
self in your fruitless Addresses to me, but
send this, to intreat you will desist visiting
me; for, having resolv'd to give myself to
another, it may create an Uneasiness in him,
whom I would wish only to make happy.—
I own your Merits, but you know there is
no account to be given for Inclination; which
not being in your favour, I hope you will
take this as a final Answer from

ALINDA.

NEVER Woman gave a greater Proof of her Friendship to another, than she did in discarding *Bellamant*; for tho' her Mind had been very much divided between two, as she thought, of equal Merit; yet she found a Charm in *Bellamant's* Conversation, which made it not altogether so easy, as she pretended, to part with him: However, it was not to her disadvantage; for, perhaps, it never would

would have been in her power to have made her choice, if this Discovery of his Engagement with *Euphemia* had not happen'd to turn the Balance wholly on the side of *Ellmour*.

BUT to return: *Euphemia* was extremely satisfy'd with what her obliging Cousin had writ, and it was sent away immediately; but very much fail'd of the Effects they imagin'd it would have on the Heart of him who receiv'd it: for tho' he was, for some Reasons which shall hereafter be related, a little vex'd at the Disappointment, he had others which prevented him from repining much at her want of that Affection, he had flatter'd himself with the Belief that Lady had for him.

ALINDA was no less diligent in the Performance of her other Promise, than she had been in this: She engag'd a Person, very well qualify'd for such an Undertaking, to make a diligent Enquiry into the Circumstances of *Bellamant*; and in a few days he brought them Intelligence, that Gentleman was far from being what he was generally believ'd, that his Estate was too deeply mortgag'd for him ever to redeem it, and that he was also involv'd in other Debts; which, put together, would amount to a very large Sum.

THESE Tidings abated great part of the Indignation *Euphemia* had conceiv'd against him: She now began to imagine, that it was indeed the Fear of making her unhappy which had made him break off the Match with her;

E

and

26 The SURPRIZE; or,

and tho' her Womanish Pride would not suffer her to forgive his carrying his Addresses elsewhere, yet she thought of him with a Compassion which wanted not much of that Tenderness with which she had formerly regarded him. These favourable Sentiments were very much heighten'd in her, when the same Person who had brought the former Account, came with a second, more melancholy than the other; it was, that the Creditors of *Bellamont*, who, it seems, had delay'd giving him trouble, only on being told he was to be marry'd to a great Fortune, hearing the Affair was at an end, had thrown him into Prison, whence, it was believ'd, he never would return.

NOW was *Euphemia* convinc'd, it was not through Dislike he quitted her, and the extreme Passion she ever had for him, having Pity added to it, o'erflow'd her whole Soul with such a Tenderness, that 'tis to be doubted if ever she lov'd him so well as in this Ebb of Fortune, rejoicing it was in her power to redeem him from the Calamities he labour'd under. She sent immediately to raise the Sum for which he was confin'd, resolving to set him free; but at the same time resolv'd also to prove how much he merited that Tenderness: She form'd a Scheme which must infallibly let her into the Secrets of his Heart.

THE Moment she receiv'd the Money, she sent to procure the Freedom of her beloved *Bellamont*, paying off all the Demands that were made on him both by his Creditors,
and

and the Prison-Keepers. The Person who was entrusted in the Affair, being charg'd not to appear before *Bellamant*, he had no notice of what was done for him, till the Goaler told him he was at liberty, and that all his Debts were entirely clear'd; and this he was oblig'd to repeat many times, and confirm the Truth of what he said by Oaths, before that unhappy Gentleman could believe he was in earnest; nor, till he saw himself without the Prison-Walls, could he think his Deliverance was real.——But when he found he was indeed free to dispose of himself as he pleas'd, 'tis difficult to determine whether his Joy at being so, or Amazement from what hand so unexpected a Relief was given, had the most share in his Soul.——It was Night when he was discharg'd, and too late to go any where but to his Bed, to recover the Fatigue and Disorder which he had suffer'd in his late Lodging, but intended to go in the Morning to all those of his Friends, who he thought had either the Will or the Ability to do so generous an Action.——He was, in spite of his Misfortunes, of a Nature too noble to endure the Weight of such an Obligation, without knowing to whom he was indebted for it.——He was as uneasy to express his Gratitude, as some, after doing such an Action, would have been to receive the Retributions due to it; and it was the Thoughts by which means he should arrive at the Knowledge of his Benefactor, which kept him from enjoying that Repose which otherwise he might have taken, and rous'd him from his Bed much earlier

28 The SURPRIZE; or,

lier than he had ever been accusom'd. He was dress'd, and just going out, when at the Door he met *Elmour*, who, after accosting him with the usual Civilities of the Morning, told him, he had a word or two of consequence to say to him, and desir'd he would walk a little way from the House. *Bellamant* was of too complaisant a Disposition, to refuse a Request of this kind, tho' made him by his Rival, and one who he knew had, since his Acquaintance with *Alinda*, both envy'd and hated him.— When they had walk'd a few Paces, *Bellamant* (said he) notwithstanding that Animosity which must of necessity arise from Competitorship in Love, I was unfeign'dly concern'd for your late Misfortune, and should have rejoiced to hear you were deliver'd from it by any other means than those you are.—But as your present Condition is as far above my Hopes, as that from which you are freed is below my Fears; you must not think to triumph over me in all.—Tho' you have got the better of me in Love, you shall not in Revenge—at least we'll try who most deserves *Alinda's* Favour.

THE Hebrew Language to an *Idiot* could not be less intelligible than were these Words to *Bellamant*; and expressing his Ignorance of what he meant, by Queries commonly made use of when one cannot comprehend the Sense of what is spoke, the other imagin'd he was studying for an Evasion to put him off.— It is by such Artifices as these (cried he fiercely) that you have supplanted my Interest with *Alinda*: but—He was going on, when *Bellamant*, surpriz'd

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surpriz'd more than before, interrupted him, saying, Hold, *Ellmour*, either you come to trifle with me in the manner you accuse me of, or somebody has misinform'd you.—I doubted not but you were the happy Man for whose sake I was discarded. 'Tis false, *re-*
sum'd the other, half choak'd with rising Passion, you are not discarded, I am sufficiently convinc'd that was but a Fallacy to amuse the World.—No Woman would for a Man she had not thought of marrying, disburse a Sum such as she paid for you:—And to leave you no room for a denial of this Truth—know, that at the time of your Enlargement, which was about Eleven last Night, myself was in the Prison visiting an unhappy Friend, and saw the Person who was sent to discharge you; which being a Fellow I have often seen at *Alinda's*, and whom I know she employs on several Occasions, immediately inform'd me, it was to no other than that Lady you were oblig'd.—

IS it possible! cry'd the astonish'd *Bellamant*, (now half believing the truth of what he said) am I then so dear to the excellent *Alinda*! As dear to her, answer'd *Ellmour*, as thou art the contrary to me—therefore delay no longer the Satisfaction I have vow'd to take, but follow me this moment, or I will write thee *Coward* on every Post in town.—He turn'd away in speaking these Words; and the other must indeed have been thought to have deserv'd that Name, so detestable to all Men of Spirit, if he had refus'd to follow him.—Severe Prevalence of Custom, which leaves no Medium be-

30 *The SURPRIZE; or,*

between the Extremes of Shame, or Guilt —
A Demand of this nature renders the Man,
who not immediately answers it, liable to the
most opprobrious Insults; and if he does, to
the Punishment the Law inflicts on Duellists.

THE furious *Elmour* went directly to a
Field famous for determining these private
Quarrels: and *Bellamant*, at his last Words
equally enraged, was not many Paces behind
him. Both their Swords were in a moment
out; but before either of them had time to
make use of them, their Arms were on a sud-
den arrested by four or five Men, who from a
Covert rush'd out upon them. *Bellamant*, who
had engag'd to fight only in point of Honour,
had no reason to be concern'd at the Disap-
pointment; but *Elmour* was outrageous at it,
not doubting but himself had been the occa-
sion of this delay of that Revenge, by not
writing to *Alinda*; which, however, he resolv'd
to take some other time.

AFTER having seen that Person in the
Prison, and heard in what manner *Bellamant*
had been deliver'd, he imagin'd himself as much
assur'd it was done by the command of *Alinda*,
as if he had seen herself there in person; and,
full of the most violent Emotions of despairing
Love, he resolv'd either to lose his own, or
have the Life of his suppos'd more fortunate
Rival. — Rest was a stranger to his Eyes that
Night — he went not to bed, but with the
utmost Impatience watch'd the Dawning of that
Morn, which promis'd him either a Period of
his

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his Misfortunes by his own Death, or a full Revenge for them, by that of the hated *Bellamant*.——

THE much expected Hour being at length arriv'd, as he was going out to prosecute his Intentions, he bethought himself, that if it should be his fortune to fall by the Sword of his Antagonist, he should not die in peace, losing the opportunity of complaining to *Alinda* of the Cruelty and Injustice, wherewith he thought himself treated by her.——To that end, therefore, he turn'd back into his Chamber, and writ to her in this manner.

To the Cruel *ALINDA*.

THO there needs no other Weapon than your Scorn to send me from the World, I go to receive a Pass-port from the Hand of my too happy Rival——In *War*, as in *Love*, he will have all manner of Advantages over me.——Enliven'd with the transporting Assurances you have given him of rewarded Tenderness, your Favour, like a guardian Angel, will hover round his Heart, and shield it from my enervate Rage.——whilst I, press'd down by my Despair, can only prove I merited not by Cowardice the Fate I have met——Perhaps, before Noon, you will hear the unhappy *Ellmour* is no more.——I will not ask your Pity for my Misfortunes; for had you ever thought me worthy of it, you would not with study'd Cruelty

32 The SURPRIZE; or,

Crucity have inflicted them.—You would not, O! too unjust *Alinda*! so often, by a seeming Kindness, have rais'd me to the highest Hopes, only to make my Fall the more terrible to be borne.—If *Belmont* appear'd more deserving in your Eyes, my Constancy, and Ardency of Affection merited, at least, to have been fairly dealt with.—I blame you not for preferring him, tho' a Bankrupt in every thing but your Tenderness; but the Deceit with which you have so long beguiled my too believing Soul, is what I do not think you can, on cool Reflection, ever forgive yourself.—But I shall insist no farther on your Fault, or my Misfortune; I wish you never may have cause to repent it: for believe, your Happiness is the first in the Desires of him, who, living, or dying, can never be but

Yours,

ELLMOUR,

P. S. This Moment carries me to my triumphant Rival: if the Justice of my Cause should weigh down the good Fortune of his, and by my Sword he falls, condemn only your own Mismanagement, which interests Heaven on the side of the injur'd *Ellmour*.

THE Surprise and Vexation *Alinda* was in at the receipt of this Letter, is not to be express'd: She ran immediately to *Euphemia's* Cham-

Constancy Rewarded. 33

Chamber, and giving it to her to read, made her an equal Sharer in the same Astonishment and Fright.——— *Alinda*, who had really a great regard for *Ellmour*, was sensibly touch'd both at his Despair, and the Apprehensions of what it drove him to; But *Euphemia*, whose very Soul was in *Bellamant*, was like one distracted.

SOME Moments were wasted in fruitless Exclamations: but *Alinda*, whose Thoughts were more calm, reminded her they had no time to lose; that while they were venting unavailing Complaints, both their Lovers might perish by the mistaken Fury of each other.

THE Person, therefore, who was sent to discharge *Bellamant* from Prison, happening to be in the House, he was immediately dispatch'd, with a strict Charge to get as many of his Friends as he could conveniently call on without loss of time, and go with them to the Street where *Bellamant* liv'd, and watch his coming forth.

THE Fellow obey'd the Orders he had given him with all imaginable Diligence; and having procur'd four or five of his Acquaintance, stood at a little distance from the House, but near enough to observe all that pass'd.——— They saw the Rivals meet, perceiv'd they talk'd together, and follow'd them to the Place agreed on to decide the Controversy; taking the advantage of a Row of Trees, which serv'd them as a Skreen from the notice of
F those

34 *The SURPRIZE; or,*

those they follow'd, still keeping on the contrary side till they found their Presence needful; then, all at once, rush'd out upon them, in the manner already represented.

SCARCE did the imagin'd Disappointment of his *Love* give the enrag'd *Ellmour* more Vexation, than this of his intended Vengeance: Despair had made him so regardless of all other Considerations, that he matter'd not what became of himself, if he might but reach the Life of him who, he believ'd, had ruin'd him with *Alinda*; and the Persons who gave this seasonable Interruption, were oblig'd to keep him by force from flying on *Bellamant*.— Having parted them with much difficulty, some of them in a manner forc'd *Ellmour* to leave the Place, while the rest attended *Bellamant* home to his Lodging.

IT was not till after *Ellmour* was entirely out of sight, that the Person who had manag'd this Affair appear'd, being order'd to the contrary by the Ladies, not doubting but if he were seen by that Gentleman, it would very much encrease his Fury: but as soon as he came to his Lodgings, he set himself to perform the other Part of his Task, which was given him before there seem'd any Cause for employing him in this, and was the reason for which he was sent for by *Alinda*.

IT was to tell *Bellamant*, that he was oblig'd, for his Relief, to a Lady, who had seen him but by chance, and had never spoke
to

Constancy Rewarded. 35

to him; but, charm'd with the Beauties of his Person, had endeavour'd to make an enquiry into his Circumstances, and by that means came to be told how unfortunate they were.

THIS threw *Bellamant* again into his former Perplexity; he was almost convinc'd by the Words and Behaviour of *Elmour*, that it was to *Alinda* he had ow'd that Obligation, and had been brought to believe, that it was only to make tryal of his Faith, or some other Whim, that had induc'd her to write to him in the manner she had done; nor could he yet assure himself it was not so, till putting the Matter home to this Intelligencer, and repeating to him what *Elmour* had told him, and the occasion of his Resentment to him, the other assur'd him by many Oaths, as he very truly might, that it was to a Woman vastly different in Form, Humour, and Fortune from *Alinda*, that he was indebted for the late Favour he had receiv'd.

ALINDA, said he, is vastly tall, the other is of a middle Stature: *Alinda* has, indeed, a Fortune which might enable her to have confer'd this Obligation on you, had she been so dispos'd; but the other has an Estate of more than three-times as much. He then proceeded to inform him for what reason the Jealousy of *Elmour* had been alarm'd, acknowledging he frequently had done Business for *Alinda*, but that he was also employ'd by many other Ladies beside her.

F 2

BUT,

36 The SURPRIZE; or,

BUT, *contin'd he*, I need give myself no farther trouble to confute this mistaken Opinion; the Lady to whom you are so much oblig'd, is desirous of receiving your Thanks this Evening in *St. James's-Park*; the most unfrequented Walk in it being that by *Rosamond's Pond*; you will find her there. She designs to come mask'd, but the sign shall be a white Handkerchief in her Hand; which, as you come near, she will let fall, to give you an occasion of taking it up, and accosting her.—I doubt not but when you meet, you will be more effectually convinc'd, than all I can say will have the power to make you.

'TIS easy to believe *Bellamant* receiv'd the Assurance of an *Eclaircissement* of so mysterious an Adventure with no small Satisfaction; and begging pardon for insisting so much on the Truth of what the mistaken Jealousy of *Elmour* had suggested to him, assur'd his Informer, he would not fail to be at the Place at the time appointed; and entreated also, that if he acquainted the Lady with his Unbelief, he would also make her sensible of the seeming Reasons he had for it: which the other faithfully promising, took leave.

NEVER did the Hours move so heavily away, as those of *Bellamant's* did, till the obliging Dial told him it was Six—Then, with the Wings of impatient Curiosity, which are sometimes, in both Sexes, more swift than those of Love, he flew to the *Rendezvous*; and had

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had not been there above a Minute or two, before the punctual Lady appear'd: The Signal being given, he took it up, and with an Air, which at once express'd Gallantry and Humility, presenting it to her; Madam (*said he*) how fortunate am I to do you this little Service! which, if no ill Planet intervenes to thwart my more benignant ones, may be an Introduction to some of greater Consequence.

BELLAMANT (*answer'd she*) is so accustomed to say fine things, that I wonder not he has them at command for a Woman, who, 'tis probable, he may believe expects them from him. I am much mistaken, Madam (*re-sum'd he*) if the divine Person I am now talking to, has not a right to expect every thing from *Bellamant*.——It is to your Goodness, I owe much more than my Life; but as I have nothing else to offer, I beg you will dispose of that.——If I should be of a humour to take you at your word (*interrupted she hastily*) I am afraid you would very much repent your Complaisance. Far from it (*rejoin'd he*;) nor is it more than Justice for me to offer you what is your own. Your Goodness has redeem'd me from a worse than *Turkish* Slavery, and I am now your Property, part of your Fortune, to be disposed of as you shall think most fit.——Haste then (*continued he, with a low Bow*) my charming Mistress, to employ my Zeal; you shall not find a Task so difficult I would not be proud to obey. Suppose (*replied the Lady*) I should enjoin you one, the offices of which would be as lasting as your Life?——With what

38 *The SURPRIZE; or,*

what Zeal, with what Pleasure, would you obey a Command so rigorous?—But to set Raillery apart (*continued she, in a more serious Accent*) could you, on my Recommendation, venture to marry a Woman whom you have never seen, and have no other Security than my Word, that she is not disagreeable, old, ill-natur'd, vain, proud, and has all the Ill-qualities that can render a Person of our Sex odious to yours! If she has half your Goodness (*cried he, in a seeming Rapture*) it will be sufficient Compensation for the want of all other Charms: And I cannot believe that you, so eminently stored with it yourself, and from whom I have receiv'd such unmerited Favours, would impose any thing on me, which would not be an Addition to the Happiness you have already confer'd. Well then (*resum'd she*) I will not keep you long in Suspence, be at your Lodging to-morrow about this Hour, and I will send a Messenger, who shall conduct you to the Lady I have made choice of for you.—In the mean time, if you would preserve the good Opinion I have of you, endeavour not at an Enquiry, which would be unavailing to you, and entirely disoblige me; which *Bellamant* having assur'd her he would not do, she took her Leave.

I believe I may spare myself the pains of telling my Reader, that this Lady was no other than *Euphemia*, who, burning with Impatience to see her dear *Bellamant* (now half restor'd to her former good Opinion) had taken these measures: Neither have I occasion to endeavour at a Representation of those
Emo-

Constancy Rewarded. 39

Emotions both felt in expectation of what the appointed Hour should bring forth ; which being arrived, the Messenger, who had all along been employ'd in the Management of this Business, and who had acquitted himself so well in the Trust reposed in him, came to the Lodgings of *Bellamant*, to perform the last part of it ; and finding him ready, conducted him to a very large and magnificently furnish'd House.—Several Footmen, in rich Liveries, attended in the Hall ; and every thing had the Appearance rather of the Palace of a Dutchess, than the Apartment of a private Gentlewoman. After having shown him up stairs into a fine Dining-Room, he took his Leave, telling him the Lady of the Dwelling would wait on him immediately.

BELLAMANT had scarce time to think whether the Owner of this stately House were the Lady to whom he ow'd his Liberty, or that which he had promis'd to resign it to, or if they were not both one, when he perceiv'd the Lady who he had entertain'd in the Park, come toward him : She was mask'd, as before, but by her Air and Stature, he knew her to be the same.

I will not go about to apologize (*said she*) for concealing my Face ; I have Reasons for it, which, when you are acquainted with, I know you will forgive.—In the mean time, I entreat you will be seated, for I have that to say, which will require your utmost Attention.—You must therefore lay aside all your accustom'd Gallan-

40 *The SURPRIZE; or,*

Gallantry and Complaisance, and answer to the Demand I have to make you, with the same Sincerity as you would Heaven, at your latest Hour.

SHE pronounc'd these Words in an Accent so very grave, as gave a sensible Alarm to the Person they were address'd to: but it was infinitely increas'd, when after he had bound himself by Oath to conceal nothing she desir'd to know,—I cannot doubt (*said she*) but you are sufficiently acquainted with the World, to be assur'd, such Actions as you have found from me, proceed only from *Love*.—You are certainly convinc'd, that to make your Happiness, is the way to compleat my own: but the uncommon Means I am about to offer, will, perhaps, oblige you to confess my Passion elevated to a height you before had not the least Notion of.—Your Compliance to espouse a Woman you had never seen, I take as the effect of *Gratitude*, and am well pleas'd to find that good Quality in the Man I love: but to prove with what a disinterested Affection I regard you, I this moment discharge you from the Promise I yesterday exacted from you, and will not be oblig'd, for a return of *Love*, to any Motive but *Love*; which since impossible you should feel for a Woman, to whose Face and Humour you are utterly a Stranger, I beg to know if you are entirely free from Prepossession, and at liberty to receive the Impression I would wish to inspire. Here she ceas'd, and *Bellamant*, all Confusion and Amazement, had not immediately the power of replying,

Constancy Rewarded. 41

plying, any otherwise than by a deep Sigh; which giving her some reason to imagine she had touch'd him in the tenderest part: I am afraid (*resumed she*) that I have ask'd a Question you have too much Complaisance to answer with the Sincerity I wish.

BUT to convince you that nothing can oblige me so much as Truth, I solemnly protest, by the power whom we adore, by all things sacred above, or dear below, I will not only relinquish all that power your Gratitude has given me over your Affections; but, to the utmost of my power, endeavour to forward the Reward of them, with that happier Woman, whom your Judgment or Inclination prefers to the rest of her Sex.

I have been told (*continued she, perceiving he was yet silent*) that of late you have made your Addressee to a very fine Lady, I think they call her *Alinda*.

AH, Madam! (*interrupted he, with a visible Disorder in his Face*) would to God all that labour in the Pangs of hopeless Love, felt no more than I was ever capable of knowing for that Lady. Then it is to some other (*cried she hastily*) that you are indebted for your Sensibility of the tender Passion?

THESE Words seem'd to plunge Bel-
lamant into greater Confusion than before;

42 *The SURPRIZE; or,*

a burning Blush spread itself all o'er his Face, and his whole Frame seem'd to tremble with convulsive Agonies.

SPEAK, (*said the Lady, no less disorder'd, tho' for far different Reasons*) by the Perturbations which you, in vain, endeavour to conceal, I am sufficiently convinc'd that you have lov'd.—That you do love with an unvanquishable Passion, and which your Gratitude; and, perhaps, the Interest you may imagine to yourself in flattering my Wishes, has hitherto prevented you from revealing.—But I conjure you, by the Oath you have taken to resolve me in whatever I ask'd, to let me know the Truth of this Affair; and by that myself has sworn, again assure you, that nothing you can do will so much oblige me.—Tell me then the Truth, without Disguise.

SHE spoke these last Words with such an Emphasis, as shew'd she was infinitely concern'd in his Reply; and sure never Man suffer'd more in an Uncertainty what was best for him to do, than he did in this Moment: but being of a Temper naturally open and sincere, however some Circumstances of Life had obliged him sometimes to disguise the Truth; and being adjur'd to it now with so pressing an Earnestness, he resolv'd to obey her, whatever should be the Event.

SINCE you command me, Madam (*said he*) by Adjurations too powerful to be refused,

Constancy Rewarded. 43

fused, I must no longer conceal what, perhaps, the Knowledge of, will add to the Perplexity I see you are already involv'd in.—I cannot deny, Madam, but I have lov'd—that I do love—but at the same time assure you, that 'tis a hopeless Flame; for tho' bless'd far beyond my Merits, with the Affection of my Charmer, my cruel Fortune has laid an indissoluble Bar between us, and curses me, in an eternal Absence.—All I have to wish, is, that she may be enabled to forget me, as I have long, tho' vainly endeavour'd, to do her.

'TIS generously confess'd (*cried the Lady, in a faint Voice;*) and since you have gone thus far, think me not unworthy of the remaining part of the Secret.—What could happen to separate Hearts by mutual Tenderneſs united?

THE Malevolence of ill Fate (*reply'd he.*) My unhappy Circumstances requir'd a Wife's Fortune to retrieve; which, at my first Acquaintance with her, who soon became the Mistress of my Soul, I imagin'd she was in possession of.—But too late, alas! I found the contrary, and that her Parents had been able to leave her no more than a thousand Pounds, which was a Trifle to what my Wants requir'd.—Living with an Aunt who was vastly rich, I had hope, since she allow'd of my Pretensions, she would considerably add to her Fortune: but I was deceiv'd, she offer'd no more than to

44 *The SURPRIZE; or,*

double what was left her, and that was ineffectual to have redeem'd my Mortgage, without which both must have been wretched.—The extreme Passion I had for her, render'd it impossible for me to wish to make her a Partner in my Misfortunes. I resolv'd to bear my Load of Woe alone, with this additional one, of being for ever separated from all I lov'd on Earth:—But, ashamed of declaring the Truth, yet bent to obey the Dictates of Generosity, I shew'd an Act of Self-denial, which there are but few Parallels of; and when every thing was preparing to make me the happiest of Mankind, tore myself away from all I lov'd—from all I ever can love with that Ardency of Affection! and to leave her untouch'd with my Calamity, entail'd an endless Curse upon myself.

I have but one thing more to ask, *said the Lady*; Is the Name of her you lov'd a Secret I must not know? Nothing, *Madam*, *answer'd he*, must be deny'd to your forgiving Goodness: She was call'd *Euphemia*, born in *Wiltshire*, and of a Parentage far above her Fortune. But to go about to describe the thousand Charms, the thousand Graces which shone about her Form, inspir'd her Conversation, and render'd her Temper the sweetest and most obliging in the world, were a Task as impossible to perform, as it would be imprudent to attempt.

YOU shall not need——*cry'd the Lady*,
(*throwing off her Mask, and discovering herself*)

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to be the Person he spoke of) you shall not need, my dearest *Bellamant* ! it is no matter what the Person of *Euphemia* is ; her Fate, I am sure, is glorious in this discover'd Constancy of the charming *Bellamant*.

WITH these Words she threw herself into his Arms, who, with the strong Surprise! the sudden Rush of overwhelming Extasy, was for some Moments quite incapable of Speech, or Motion.——But when recover'd enough to do it, how many Efforts did he make to utter what he felt? In vain, alas! for 'twas unspeakable; but what Language wanted Words to express, Embraces, Kisses, rapturous Graspings, and all the Excess of fond endearing Passion very well supply'd.——

THE first wild Tumults of their mutual Transport being a little over, *Alinda*, who had been conceal'd in the next Room to observe what pass'd, came in to wish them Joy; and, at their leisure, every Particular of this Transaction was related.——

IN a few days their Marriage was solemniz'd with a Magnificence suitable to the Tenderness they had for each other.——

ELLMOUR, of all the Persons concern'd in the Affair, was the only distressed Person; who, being inform'd of what had happen'd, and convinc'd of his Mistake, despair'd of ever being able to obtain a Pardon from *Alinda*, for the Rashness of his ungovern'd Jealousy.——

BUT

BUT *Bellamant* and *Euphemia*, too well convinc'd by Experience what a Heart truly touch'd with Love must feel in the resentment of the belov'd Object, pleaded so successfully in his behalf, that he was again receiv'd into favour; and, in a few Weeks after the Celebration of their own Marriage, were invited to that of his with his adorable *Alinda*.——

THUS was *Constancy* on all sides Rewarded; and by the continu'd Tenderness they had for each other after Marriage, gave a Proof, that Possession does not always extinguish Desire, and surpriz'd the World with an Example, which I am afraid more will Admire than Imitate.

F I N I S.

